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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

KAZUOMI OISHI

Application No.: 09/222,846

Filed: December 30, 1998

For: IMAGE INPUT APPARATUS,  
IMAGE INPUT METHOD,  
RECORDING MEDIUM, AND  
ENCRYPTION PROCESSING  
PROGRAM STORED IN  
COMPUTER-READABLE  
MEDIUM

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Examiner: D. Meislahn

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Group Art Unit: 2132

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Technology Center 2100

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October 28, 2003

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

REPLY TO NEW MATTER ISSUE RAISED IN ADVISORY ACTION

Sir:

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Advisory Action dated October 8, 2003. In that Advisory Action, the Examiner indicated that the amendments presented in the August 21, 2003 Amendment After Final Rejection may raise the issue of new matter. As Applicant understands the position taken in the Advisory Action, the Examiner views the specification as lacking an explicit disclosure that the key is erased before the encrypted information is output.

In response, Applicant wishes to direct the Examiner's attention to Figure 3 of the subject specification and the accompanying description found from page 21, line 1 to page 23, line 10. In the foregoing description of Figure 3, it is readily apparent that in step S6, the encryption key is erased after the digital information has been encrypted. One object of the invention described in the specification is to ensure that the encryption key is erased as soon as possible after encrypting the digital information so as to prevent others from illegally obtaining the encryption key from the image output apparatus 100. To achieve this object, the steps of Figure 3 are to be performed in the precise order described in the specification (i.e., encryption using the key (step S5) and then erasing the key after the encryption (step S6)). Accordingly, since Figure 3 explicitly erases the key immediately after the information is encrypted, and there simply is no outputting step between steps S5 and S6, it is readily apparent that the key is erased before the encrypted information is output. Moreover, those skilled in the art would readily understand that the encrypted digital information can be output at any time after the encryption has been performed, including before the erasing step, but in light of the lack of an explicit outputting step between steps S5 and S6, it is understood that the encrypted digital information is to be output after step S6 (i.e., after the key is erased).

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the amendments presented in the August 21, 2003 Amendment do not raise the issue of new matter, but are fully supported by the specification as originally filed.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa,  
California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to  
our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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